

# **PACIFIC WEEKLY**

**A WESTERN JOURNAL OF FACT AND OPINION**

**NOVEMBER 4, 1935**



## **'UNITED FRONT' IN WASHINGTON STATE**

**BY JAMES STEELE**

**A WORD ABOUT EARL BEHRENS  
OF THE CHRONICLE**

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**VOL. III NO. 18**

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# PACIFIC WEEKLY

## A Western Journal of Fact and Opinion

VOLUME III

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1935

NUMBER 18

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### NOTES AND COMMENT

#### YOU CAN'T TRUST THEM

**L**AST WEEK San Francisco employers called in Edward Vandeleur, president of the State Federation of Labor, and said: "Either you get rid of Bridges or we will. But if we do, we'll get rid of you and all organized labor unions at the same time."

This is why the rank and file say you can't trust the old, compromising, "responsible" A. F. of L. officialdom. Already the A. F. of L. has a working agreement with the American Legion, that labor-loving organization, to wipe out rank and file control, any vestige of democracy, in the labor unions: already Vandeleur supports Rossi, who sent troops to shoot workers. It is well known that the hatred of the old-line labor leaders for the rank and file leaders is worse than their feelings for any other group in the community.

This is the reason why those who stand for democracy say that the workers have no one but themselves to lean on: no powerful arm protects them, not the army or the employers or the police or mayors or the state—for these have all been used against them; nor even arbitration. For when unions are weak arbitration gives them the short end of the stick always.

This is what Judge W. H. Denman was unclear about—as all liberals and old-style reformers, however honest and upright and well-meaning, must be: arbitration looks as if it must be square, and our abstract liberal, democratic, seemingly justice-loving culture therefore approves it.

It should work out like that; therefore we believe in it.

What the new conditions of labor strife, difficulties between workers and employers (if you don't like the term class-struggle) show us is that arbitration is not square. It can't be square.

There are a thousand instances in labor history where arbi-

tration has worked to the advantage of the employers and not the workers. The very fact that labor is asked to return to work pending arbitration usually stops a strike. If the workers don't like the arbitration, theoretically they can strike again. But in practice it isn't so easy to organize strikes. And the arbitration is often handed down many months after the struggle.

In the seamen's case their arbitration was handed down in May, 1935, ten months after the marine strike ended. The seamen didn't like it then. But involve 35,000 marine workers in another strike for that reason alone? Of course, it would not have been possible. So they had to take it. But when the time came for them to revise the arbitration agreement legally (last month) they stated their disapproval of it. The employers said, "Why, you've only had it four months, and already you're squawking. That shows labor doesn't want agreements", etc., etc.

One thing the seamen want is time off on land. At present in lieu of wages for overtime they get time off at sea. What good is that to them—free days at sea? Seamen haven't yet been given the opportunities which would make them welcome free days at sea—the chance to sit in a deck chair with Shelley or Jeffers' latest poem, or Proust or Dostoyevsky. So they ask for time off on land or else their wages in money.

Then they have been told they won't keep agreements. Heads I win, tails you lose.

#### THE SHIPOWNERS' POLICY

**J**UDGE W. H. DENMAN made a dignified and reasonable-sounding objection to such "repudiation". He also said:

*I am no apologist for the shipowners' policy looking to the destruction of the maritime unions. They in large part must assume responsibility for the present chaotic condition of their waterfront.*

*Running a shipping company is not an eleemosynary business but mere business common sense should have taught that the destruction of responsible independent union bargaining means instability of industrial conditions, with inevitable financial loss in the long run.*

This pronouncement is far more important and far-reaching and revealing than his objections to the seamen's attitude toward their agreements.

He also objected to violence in union-forming. No one likes violence. But it happens that the A. F. of L. built its unions with the brass knuckle—yes, the A. F. of L. unions now graced by such gentlemen as Scharrenberg, Vandeleur and Green. That was in the early days. These unions, grown fat and conservative and easy, once had to be violent to get their organizing work done. Historians may mark that fact.

#### THE PEOPLE KNOW NOW

**W**ITH the capitalist newspapers of San Francisco standing solidly behind the cleverly-adopted plan of the Big Interests to give the United Labor Ticket in the municipal election

nothing but silence, the United Labor Campaign Committee resorted to the use of printer's ink on a large scale last week and delivered into the hands of almost every San Francisco voter a copy of "The United People's Press".

A four-page newspaper of the campaign, it provided for the entertainment and edification of the voters the facts about Mayor Rossi's career and his continued allegiance to those forces which plot the destruction of organized labor in San Francisco.

It showed, too, how dumb a labor official can be, or how dishonorable. It is a charitable view to take that Edward Vandeleur, president of the State Federation of Labor, is dumb. It is almost impossible to believe that a man who can read and write could be so dumb, but if no moral turpitude is to be connected with Vandeleur's present open and announced support of Mayor Rossi, most certainly his is a case of arrested mental development. On an intelligence test he would be shown to have the mind of a child twelve years old, and this would be rather hard on the twelve-year-olds.

It is indicated, however, from all one can pick up on the streets and in the by-ways of San Francisco on the eve of this municipal election, that the rank-and-file voters of the city understand Mr. Vandeleur, have a pretty clear idea of the motives and purposes back of Mayor Rossi, and appreciate the fact that other candidates who are granted daily publicity in the columns of the daily newspapers are, after all, all in the same camp when it comes to a decision between capital and labor.

It is very evident from what one hears in the increasing under-current in San Francisco that Big Business and its two-barreled publicity department, the Chambers of Commerce, will get the surprise of their lives this Wednesday morning.

There's a way out for the heart of San Francisco. It will be manifest in a tremendous vote Tuesday for Redfern Mason, Ben Legere, George Andersen, William Riesener, John D. Shaw, Evan Wattles, William Saunders, Tanna Alex, James Tracy and Morris Benson.

## A FINE PROGRAM

**T**O FURTHER cultural relations with the Soviet Union." For this purpose the American Russian Institute was formed some years ago in the United States. In the face of silly slander, the rantings of ignorant American "patriots" and a general rank-and-file ignorance of the progress of civilization it has prospered and advanced an intelligent understanding of the Soviet Russian social and economic evolution.

This year, on November 7, the anniversary of the founding of the Soviet government, the American Russian Institute of San Francisco has planned an unusually fine program for an informal dinner at the Sir Francis Drake Hotel. Dr. Ralph A. Reynolds, president of the Institute, will be chairman, and the speakers and their subjects will be as follows:

M. G. Galkovitch, Consul General, Union of Soviet Social Republics, "Progress and Change in the Soviet Union."

Prof. Thomas Addis, Department of Medicine, Stanford University, "The Physiological Congress in Moscow and Leningrad."

J. S. Newmark, Australian Sculptor, "Architecture and Sculpture in the Soviet Union."

Prof. H. H. Fisher, Department of History, "Peace Policy of the Soviet Union in Relation to the Present Crisis."

Prof. Agnes Fay Morgan, Department of Household Science, University of California, "Some Further Notes on the

Congress."

Prof. Alexander Kaun, Slavic Department, University of California, "Militant Optimism in Soviet Literature and the Drama."

Holland D. Roberts, School of Education, Stanford University, "How Education Works in the Soviet Union."

Mrs. Alberta L. Baumberger, President, Social Workers' Alliance, San Francisco, "Social Welfare in the Soviet Union."

## AGAINST WAR

**P**ACIFIC WEEKLY announces with pride that Sara Bard Field, one of our associate editors, poet and author, will be the principal speaker at the Anti-War Mass Meeting in the Oakland Civic Auditorium Sunday evening, November 10.

The Alameda County Central Labor Council's endorsement of the American League Against War and Fascism, which is sponsoring the Anti-War Meet, has rallied trade unions and professional associations to enthusiastic support of the meeting. A jammed auditorium is expected, inasmuch as fifty thousand recently marched in the peace parade mobilized by the American League in New York, which was backed by Democratic clubs and church groups and many other societies and addressed by Francis Gorman, president of the textile workers' unions.

## BEHIND THE MASK

*So may the outward shows be least themselves;  
The world is still deceiv'd with ornament.*

**W**ORLD'S fairs and expositions, for instance. Last week Mr. Frank Drugan, executive secretary of the California Pacific International Exposition at San Diego, had a bright idea. He decided to gather in encomiums for the San Diego Fair and among the sources picked for the expected bouquets was the San Diego County Federated Trades and Labor Council. He thereupon wrote a letter to A. C. Rogers, secretary of that labor organization. The following, sent to us by one of our ubiquitous reporters in the south, is the reply he received. It must have shocked him.

"Mr. Frank Drugan, Executive Secretary  
"California Pacific International Exposition  
"Balboa Park

"San Diego, California

"My dear Mr. Drugan:

"We have your curious request for an expression of appreciation of the C. P. I. E.'s contribution to general conditions. Your request allows us to enjoy a most frank and honest expression which we wish you would bring to the attention of your less worthy colleagues.

"In early construction, due to Organized Labor's vigilant effort, most work was paid for at the prevailing wage scales, and hours and conditions seemed not serious. However, during the inefficient rush of last minute construction, and ever since the Exposition opened, labor laws and union rules have been as completely disregarded, wherever possible, as if they did not exist.

"The fact that fifty labor law complaints have been filed against the concessionaires and exhibitors within the exposi-



tion does not begin to indicate the peonage employment conditions in the big show. Yet article 8 of your contract with concessionaires makes you equally responsible with them for these conditions.

"Since you have asked for a sweeping appraisal of the Exposition, Organized Labor must take account of the place of your institution in the community as more than an employer of labor. Your flagrant violations of California's good labor laws and your persistence in operating open shop enterprises have had dismal social effects, encouraging law violation more serious than disobedience of the prohibition law before it was repealed; however, there are other aspects of your enterprises with which Labor, as an organization of self-respecting citizens, must be concerned. In no particular order, we venture these remarks based upon files of information in our possession, and we should enjoy public debate on any issue raised.

"We believe that the taxpayer of the United States has been seriously wronged in the ways you have been allowed to use SERA and other relief labor, and that you have even imposed upon the free time of the destitute. In other words, putting it baldly, you have robbed your country and the poor.

"We believe that in the distribution of more than one hundred thousand passes to the Exposition, you insensibly and ungratefully neglected those whom you have exploited.

"We believe that the Exposition has illegally occupied park acreage maintained with tax money, and has illegally secured a profitable parking and gas station concession for Walter Casey (thus paying him a political debt with a public privilege).

"We believe that you have illegally fenced into the Exposition excellent public tax-supported cultural institutions directed by citizens with memberships in quasi-public associations who have not been compensated for rights which you have abrogated. Your charge of admission to our park and institutions is a public nuisance. No doubt many of the visitors this summer have credited the C. P. I. E. with the tax supported exhibits of our civic institutions.

"We believe that aside from the Ford and governmental exhibits, you have succeeded in bringing little of value to San Diego. Most of the buildings you have erected are architectural eyesores, and you have despoiled the Plaza de Panama.

"We believe that you have taken unfair advantage of the men in the United States Navy, and of naval equipment.

"We believe that you have allowed the laws of decency and public morals to be violated with particularly unwholesome effect upon the young of this community.

"We believe that you have frequently misrepresented your financial set-up and condition to the public.

"We believe that your show has been of some benefit to real estate operators and certain commercial enterprises and private utilities, but the net effect upon most of the rest of this community has been distinctly reprehensible, over and above the increase in cost of living for the mass which you have occasioned.

"An Exposition may be a welcome playground for people of means who desire to play away from home, but as a means of economic relief it is only a distraction. Nothing is produced and money is only passed out here instead of somewhere else. Thus Expositions are becoming instruments of competitions between the cities. Our Exposition of 1915 had considerable merit, but yours simply prostitutes one of the loveliest parks in the world.

"You may consider my use of 'we' an editorial one.

"Personally grateful for your invitation to comment,

"I am, very truly yours,

"(Signed) A. C. Rogers, Secretary"

## LINCOLN STEFFENS SPEAKING--

ARTHUR BRISBANE remarks that the killing of Dutch Schultz drove the war off'n the front page. Yea, Schultz and Hearst. Too much justice. The government has been giving back to the poor bums some of the earnings of all of us that the rich bums got too much of. It's all right in this case. Two or three states will take Hearst, and the dromedary stays.

IN THE KICK about high taxes to make up for the billions we have been handing out too late to the distressed unemployed one can't but notice the regret, if not the indignation, that this money sometimes is charged finally to the rich who, it is alleged, got it by "industry and frugality". I used to watch the rich getting it, I got some myself, and I did not notice the industry and frugality, and with all the boys and girls aiming at riches, I think it is wrong to tell them that virtues which lead to poverty are the secrets of wealth. Why not tell the people the truth? We don't know the truth? Maybe, but we don't have to tell lies all the time, tell them sincerely, too. Why not find out and teach how to make money; teach poor and rich alike. Begin by saying right out that industry and frugality will get you no more than enough to start the ball rolling, with luck and a start: a gambler's stake.

JUDGE WILLIAM DENMAN, giving reasons for declining Labor's call to serve as arbitrator in the waterfront class battle, expresses, personifies and mourns over a sad bit of history that has happened. He and Andrew Furuseth and we old reformers have gone about as far as honesty, fairness and two-sided Liberalism can go toward the settlement of what the Reds recognize and we disdain to see as a class-war. "There are no classes; so there is no war." Judge Denman, as his statement shows, and his friend Furuseth, yes, and old Senator La Follette and Mr. Justice Brandeis, and other such honorable men—the very cream of the cream of Liberalism—have spent their lives in getting laws and practices for seamen and for Labor, at sea and on the docks. And they got reforms;

### PACIFIC WEEKLY

A Western Journal of Fact and Opinion

Published every Monday at Carmel, California. P. O. Box 1300

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their story is one of victories—many triumphs. They were justly proud of what they won, and the sailors benefited. But they did not get all. They only got what they could win by negotiation, reason and good will. And to hold that they had to stand perpetually by on guard and watch the bosses whittle the gains away. Judge Denman was always there; as faithful a friend of Labor as Andy Furuseth.

Came the Russian Revolution, where Labor and the Seamen got more than our seamen had; the Soviet seamen got all and the power to hold it without outside help. Our seamen revived from their victories, from contentment with small victories and they set out to get more.

I happened to accompany Andrew Furuseth one night to a meeting of his Union when a new element among the workers with a rank-and-file organization took over and ruthlessly trampled upon Furuseth and the old organization. It was a sad spectacle. Labor never had a more faithful officer than "old Andy Furuseth", never; and his sorrow that night was silent, bowed and black. It was no comfort to that grand old labor-leader to remind him that the workers were carrying on what he had taught them.

I remember how, once in New York, when I was taking a Sunday walk with Andy, we came to the (then) new Pennsylvania Railroad station. "Isn't it beautiful!" he exclaimed. "Labor built it." And he "bet" Labor never knew what it was building. That made him stop, look again and again he spoke, bitterly. "By God," he said aloud, "the day shall come when, besides wages and hours, the workers will demand and get a look at the plans."

To Andy Furuseth, and to Judge William Denman, to the faithful and to the square, it should be said that now in their pain and grief, Labor is going ahead to demand a "look at the plans" and that that cannot be got by negotiation and good will. Try the notion on the shipowners and see. No; the disturbing news on the waterfront is the human beings toting freight down there have got beyond us. It is true; our workers are influenced by the Russian Revolutionists and our rugged toughs who run the ships have developed something in Labor that has always been there.

Labor was organized from the start with the brass knuckle just as capital is handled with bribery and corruption.

Not only yours, Judge Denman, ALL reforms have failed. That's one reason for—The Revolution.

IT HAS LOOKED peaceful on the waterfront lately, but it isn't so. Preparations are still making for a show-down this fall. There will be a lock-out if the employers can make it. Their intention is to make it look like a strike, but the employers are the planners and they expect to make the Longshoremen walk out and so start the battle. The public are to be made to see it so. "Hot cargoes" are to be laden in the striking Gulf ports and brought here to be handled by our San Francisco workers. The first lot is to arrive about November 7. We can count on the stevedores to refuse to pick up the hot stuff; they have told us what they will do. Knowing this we can be sure of getting surprise, indignation and the town with us when it happens. Then we have got that contract and if the regular longshoremen won't do the work that there is to do, we can find others who will. We have scabs on call now. So we are all ready in our innocence to be outraged.

If the A. F. of L. leaders on our side don't want to get into trouble they know what to do; we have warned them to get rid of Bridges. That's the man we are after; not the capitalist labor skates who are on our side, but this foreign leader, this

Bridges who is out and out for his own class, who can't even be bribed from his loyalty. So we, who have done our best, are lumping all labor into a united front and holding labor parties responsible. They can't unite for Labor, so we'll join at least the ones we can get together for Capital. Neat, what?

There are some holes in this plan. The President may see through and understand it, and he might take a side to head off a fascist scheme to set up a dictatorship and settle everything with this one, last strike. Yes, I know, but he might get the facts and act upon them. Anyway the public being warned in time, might take a look in for itself. Reporters should start diaries now and be ready to "get" a world story about how fascism came to California.

THAT MAN way out there beyond our horizon, who is making signals nobody understands and saying things that nobody is ready for is Robert Briffault, the author of *Europa*, a smashing great novel that tells the story of some aristocratic people who traveled all around Europe in such a way that readers get a sweeping sense of the decay of our modern civilization, without too much regret. He comes pretty near covering the earth. Some clever readers, seeing the plan, say it is not a novel, but a mere panorama. I have read very old novels, stories of the middle ages that had such panoramic plans. It, *Europa*, strikes me as a novel that returns to the original ideal of a fictional work of art and it certainly has the most modern scope and beauty of a thoughtful, conscious work of art. Briffault has a modern use for dogma. Not the old dogma but the new, the scientific positivism. He is no liberal; his mind is down off the fences, all of them. He is a prophet of decision, and is such a relief from the balancing doubts of our passing day. An Englishman, he says England is at the dead end, finished, all over. But not England alone. He and his thousands of readers get around all over the world and, as I remarked above, see all the ends without a tear, with nothing but flowers and a shrug. *Europa* is the latest news in book shape.



## MR. BEHRENS OF THE CHRONICLE

DOWN in his heart Earl C. Behrens of the San Francisco *Chronicle* must be deeply ashamed of himself. He must go home each morning after writing the political column bearing his name, pitifully sorry for himself that in order to earn his living he has to prostitute his journalistic talents. I know just how he must feel. I did just as he is doing for more than a score of years. I was compelled to write things that I knew were untrue and restrain myself from writing what I knew to be true. Earl Behrens is making a prostitute out of himself for a steady weekly pay from the San Francisco *Chronicle*. I have utter contempt for the owners and editors of the San Francisco *Chronicle*. I pity Earl C. Behrens. I know so well how it is with him.

Just see what he has to do.

In Sunday morning's *Chronicle* he had a column under his

by-line. He had another column Monday. This is being written Monday evening, and I expect that he will have a column every day, beginning on the front page, devoted to the very serious business of re-electing Mayor Rossi, and putting into office under him those men whose incumbency will best serve the *Chronicle* and the business interests on which the *Chronicle* depends for its existence.

Mr. Behrens' Sunday morning column was a perfect example of the perfidy of American journalism, particularly of San Francisco journalism. The column was principally devoted to quotations from one Edward D. Vandeleur, president of the State Federation of Labor. Now, to every man in San Francisco, and woman, too, who works with his hands, and has the capability also to think with his head, Edward D. Vandeleur is a traitor to the cause of labor; he is, and has been for many moons in the past, guilty of continued treason to organized labor. What he says as representing organized labor is not worth the paper it is printed on, not even worth the paper the *Chronicle* is printed on. He is a catspaw of the Big Interests, a servant of Industry with a capital "I", and a well-beloved child of both San Francisco Chambers of Commerce, the infantile one and the senile one.

Mr. Behrens knows this because Mr. Behrens is an intelligent newspaperman. He knows that when he devotes his column to quotations from Vandeleur he is doing just the opposite to what his common sense of decency and the best ethics of journalism would dictate that he do. He knows that Vandeleur's championing of Mayor Rossi is the most detestable and tragically ironical thing in San Francisco's political history. But he writes it in order to get his weekly pay, and he goes home utterly disgusted with himself.

But early Sunday morning he must have gone home particularly disgusted with himself. For in his by-line story in Sunday morning's paper, he not only used subterfuge and capitalist propaganda, but he resorted to deliberate lying. I can't find it in my heart to forgive him for this. A newspaperman can be excused for a certain degree of prostitution, but there's a limit beyond which a decent newspaperman cannot be driven. A decent newspaperman should not, cannot, in fact, be driven to a deliberate lie. Mr. Behrens, in his political story Sunday morning, said this:

*The radical labor group has a ticket in the field, headed by Redfern Mason for Mayor, and includes in its list of*

*candidates for Supervisor Miss Anita Whitney, Communist Party. Miss Whitney at the moment is facing trial on a perjury charge for asserted falsification of signatures on elections petitions.*

That is a deliberate lie. Miss Anita Whitney is not a candidate for supervisor on the United Labor Ticket, or on any other ticket, for that matter. It is probable that the United Labor Ticket would be proud, if it is of my mind, to include Miss Whitney among its list of candidates, but the fact remains that it does not. Mr. Behrens, serving the interests that control the San Francisco *Chronicle*, wrote her name into the United Labor Ticket's list of candidates because it gave him an opportunity to bring in the fact that she is "at the moment facing trial on a perjury charge".

That little sentence was designed to rip a few votes from the United Labor Ticket. It probably will—among the few readers who may still believe that the *Chronicle* is an honest newspaper. But it will draw to that ticket, without doubt, many who, although they may not be among the legion who respect and admire Miss Whitney, may know that the statement made by Mr. Behrens is a lie.

So on Sunday morning Mr. Behrens resorted to distortion and falsification of the news. On Monday morning he lowered himself to the other form of prostitution—suppression of news. In the course of his political story on the progress of the campaign he named the various candidates for supervisors, those running with Mayor Rossi, those behind Mr. Uhl, those endorsed by the silly Cincinnatus, and those running independently—he named them all, but he did not name those on the United Labor Ticket.

So, with Mr. Behrens carefully and falsely handling its news columns, and Paul Smith and Chester Rowell serving their masters on the editorial page, the San Francisco *Chronicle* misleads the public, lies to the public and hides the facts from the public in the desperate effort to save San Francisco for the political grafters and the ravages of Big Business.

I have been sticking "I Don't Read Hearst" stamps on my letters. I have begun to wonder whether I am not throwing stones at a dog to the advantage of a rat. The *Examiner* and *Call-Bulletin* openly display their sores; the *Chronicle* seeks to hide its decaying flesh beneath a purple mantle.

—W. K. BASSETT

+

## THE 'UNITED FRONT' IN WASHINGTON STATE

BY JAMES STEELE

**T**HE refracted light of California's Production For Use convention alighted on the State of Washington and drew the representatives of 250,000 desperate people into convention. Some 500 of them filled the Tacoma Coliseum for a long and heated session of the newly-baptized Washington Commonwealth Federation, October 5 and 6. Instinctive and undisciplined mass demand and mass misery drove

them together—into the mirage of utopia and the soothing web of the demagogue.

At Tacoma the misery of the masses was exploited by as brutal a set of demagogues as ever drew breath. The Commonwealth Builders Inc. (the Epics of Washington), a paper organization, planned and ruled the convention. Its 45 locals (many of which haven't met for 6 or 8 months and exist



chiefly on paper) packed the convention with 90 delegates (twice its share). The basis of representation was placed at one delegate for every unit of 25 or more members; thus, the Seattle local of the Sawmill and Timber Workers' Union with more members than the entire C. B. I. (about 1,000) was allowed only one delegate.

Within the C. B. I. two groups of demagogues are fighting for control. On one side: London, renegade from the Communist Party and high-salaried tool of King County Commissioner Stevenson, and Woodward, editor of the C. B. I. paper, *The Commonwealth Builder*. On the other side: U. S. Senator Schwellenbach's men, Cannon and Costigan. Cannon is a state senator and distributor of the boodle as head of the state WPA. Costigan, associate editor of the *Commonwealth Builder*—a young man risen from nothing in two years—showed up at the convention with a fine new car and an inability to explain how he got it. His mellifluous voice broadcasts C. B. I. news daily from a local station (supposedly sponsored by a dental office) although the C. B. I. cooperative bakery is unable to raise enough money to pay its help and keep off the scab list of the Central Labor Council. Thus Stevenson and Schwellenbach factions vie for the profit of selling the organization down the river of reformist impotence.

The C. B. I.-dominated "Declaration of Purposes and Principles" called for a system of "production for use and not for profit", but its sponsors had to admit under questioning that this was a subsistence scheme for the unemployed alone. *The Commonwealth Builder*, "a newspaper of general circulation" (but with less than 1,000 circulation) is a typical reformist sheet without any basis for mass support. It worships Sinclair and his truckling to the New Deal, prints with equal piety a page for the Technocrats and a poem "in memory of Huey P. Long", retreats with a plank calling for "the eventual providing of some feasible type of social or industrial insurance", and calls for "the use of the Democratic Party by the people to accomplish these ends".

When it came time for electing temporary officers for the W. C. F. convention, it was apparent that the labor bureaucrats were working hand in glove with the bureaucrats of the C. B. I., bothered not a whit by the fact that they were betraying the faith of organized labor in working with a scab group. In a similar high-minded manner they did their best to persuade unions under rank and file control not to send delegates; those rank and file delegates that did attend were subjected to all manner of pressure by the bureaucracy. The machine forced through the election of Woodward as chairman. The "labor leader" chosen vice-president wasn't even a union member.

How were the masses sold down the river? In addition to the convention being planned and controlled weeks ahead of time by the bureaucrats of labor and the C. B. I., the leading mass organizations of a political and economic nature were rigidly excluded (Communist Party, I. L. D., Unemployed Councils, United Farmers Leagues, etc). This was accomplished by means of a mixture of demagogy and open force. The excluded organizations had agreed to the "Minimum Declaration of Purposes and Principles" to be approved by all groups sending delegates; but they were excluded on the grounds of swearing insincerely and of being "communists".

The bureaucracy had hoped for no trouble from the rank and file but they were surprised. The first question raised from the floor was: "The W. C. F. is supposed to be for the unemployed, so how can we exclude them and their organizations?" By that time the chairman awoke and ruled the

speaker out of order. Another delegate arose and began to tell how the finest pickets in the recent strikes were the unemployed—he was ruled out of order. In quick succession a lumber worker, a Technocrat and a Socialist, arose to tell how they approved of "production for use", but they did not approve of the C. B. I. plan of including only the unemployed. They demanded "production for use" for all and at union wages. Furthermore, production for use was impossible under capitalism. Each was ruled out of order as soon as the chair saw on what side he was speaking.

Finally demagogy was needed; so the chair appointed a grievance committee to hear the excluded delegates (some 30 or 40), and tried to push through the election of officers before the unemployed delegates could be seated. Filibuster delayed this trickery but couldn't stop it. Woodward was pushed into the permanent chairmanship by the bureaucracies of labor and the C. B. I.—but over the protests of the rank and file and only by throttling debate.

By that time the grievance committee appeared with its report (3 to 2) in favor of seating all excluded delegates. The minority recommended the exclusion of the Communist Party alone. No sooner had approval of the report been moved than a labor bureaucrat moved the substitution of the minority report for the majority report. Then the well-oiled machine slid into action: the chair deliberately mis-stated the minority report as excluding all contested delegates, refused to allow even the committee to state the resolution correctly, listened to several impassioned speeches from the bureaucrats, refused to allow the floor to any opposition speaker and forced through a close favorable vote on his fake resolution.

All the while and throughout the convention, especially when pulling his rawest deals, the chair protested his complete adherence to democratic procedure. But the rank and file had another name for it; they were seething with anger. A woman said: "If this is Commonwealth democracy, for God's sake deliver me from it." A pro-C. B. I. minister: "The fools. They'll wreck the convention. Why, Communists aren't any worse than the rest of us. I've got several in my church. They don't talk or disrupt any more than any one else. The one thing is, when they talk they talk sense." A lawyer: "It's the damndest thing I ever saw." A professor: "The fools; they'll kill the convention."

After adjournment for lunch, several bureaucrats congratulated the chair on his "squenching of them reds. Ya gotta treat 'em rough. They don't know nothin' else". The chair thanked them for their kind words and was visibly pleased.

At the next session, another attempt was made to seat the unemployed. Again, as with all other such attempts, the "impartial" chair labeled them Communists, and refused to allow corrections. Levine, Seattle union bureaucrat, falsely stated that if "those Communists" (the unemployed) were admitted the labor delegates would walk out. Other toadies were given the floor to re-spin all the hoary lies about "Communist disruption"; but the rank and file couldn't even secure a definition of "Communists". In desperation, the "impartial" chair dramatically pointed to a supposed disturbance in the completely quiet balcony and shouted: "Any more Communist tactics and I'll clear the gallery."

Then the committees were appointed, headed by bureaucrats and heavily loaded with same, with only a stray rank and filer. (One of the leading committeemen earns his living as one of Commissioner Stevenson's lieutenants by taking care of collections from brothels).

The rest of the first day's session was given over to stump



speeches by C. B. I. bureaucrats: "Our goal is American . . . no political self-seekers allowed . . . there must be a fight against capitalism" (but by a second Non-Partisan League, with care to make no concrete proposals); much praise for Sinclair's "foresight" ("We're either for the Mussolini or Sinclair solution"); ditto for Roosevelt's latest "hope for peace" (the week of his West Coast naval review); "the C. B. I. would gladly disappear in favor of the federation" (which it rules); the European cooperatives sold the balance of political power (!)—we must do likewise, etc., etc.

The final struggle for democratic organization took place Sunday morning when Weston, secretary of the Seattle Metal Trades Council, and the most popular figure there, was finally able to get the floor and have the grievance committee give its true report. The chair was enraged. He declared the question about "those Communists" open for the last time; and before anyone could rise to discuss it, he declared the meeting adjourned for lunch.

Was the convention a dead sell-out? Rank and file pressure had submitted to overwhelming machine control, but it forced through many genuinely progressive-radical resolutions: a demand for union wages to supplant the "security wage"; a

one-house legislature; public ownership of utilities and natural resources; socialized medicine; the repeal of criminal syndicalism laws; repeal of the sales tax; extension of the proposed "production for use" scheme to include *all* workers and at union rates of pay (following C. B. I. admission that their plan didn't contemplate union pay); and approval of a youth congress.

On the debit side of the ledger: old age pensions, paid by a transactions tax (and did the bureaucrats try to dispel the fact that this is a sales tax!); emasculation of the resolution to boycott Hearst; side-tracking of the Lundeen (Workers') Bill by the bureaucrats; etc. The unemployed, for whom the conference was supposedly called, were excluded, and even to a large extent kept in the dark as to the machinations by the imposition of a 25-cent daily charge on spectators.

The unparalleled crookedness of the bureaucracy might have killed the demand for united political and economic action had the spontaneous demand been less great. But the rank and file will soon eliminate the toadies of politics. A militant program will doubtless result. The masses demand it and they will force it.



## APOLOGISTS FOR THE STATUS QUO

BY M. STONE

**T**HERE is no science of capitalism any more than there was a science of slave holding. And there exists no science of capitalism for the same reason that there existed no science of slave holding, or, for that matter, no science of piracy, and none for the divine right of kings. Science does not lend itself to the perpetuation of fraud; in strict point of fact, to use the phrase "the science of capitalism" affirmatively would be to indulge in a contradiction in terms. That system of civilization which we call industrial capitalism is, like all previous systems of civilization, primarily a social and economic device for securing an excessive and unearned share of the national wealth for the benefit of a privileged few at the expense of the common run of the population. For just as literally as the pre-civil war landowner appropriated the products of slave labor for his own uses, our industrial and financial barons to-day appropriate the products of wage labor for the enhancement of their own powers and prestige. Exploitation cannot be justified by an appeal to facts, but is itself a fact which every effort must be made to obscure and conceal. For this reason our economic hierarchy, startled by the world-shaking events of the times, seeks to present its own justification through a thousand apologists and a million irrationalisms, but it does not have and cannot have any rational or scientific defense. Hence arises the strategy of availing itself of a pseudo-scientific defense when opportunity offers.

It does not follow from this that all, or even most, of the apologists for the status quo are dishonest or insincere. Our reigning overlords are shrewd men; they will not go out of their way to pay their spokesmen with hard cash to say what

they have already been trained to say automatically by the system of education which privilege has diverted to its own ends. So eminent an authority as Dr. John Dewey has characterized American education as the "art of taking advantage of the helplessness of the young; the forming of habits becomes a guarantee for the maintenance of hedges of custom". Dr. Dewey further informs us that "thus far schooling has been largely utilized as a convenient tool of the existing nationalistic and economic regimes". (*Human Nature and Conduct*, pp. 64 and 127). With characteristic timidity, Dr. Dewey refrains from drawing out his unpleasant conclusions with what might be thought a too great explicitness, but what the foregoing quotations mean, if they mean anything at all, is that the classes of economic privilege have utilized our great "free" system of public education to conceal from the American people the spoliation of the masses of our people.

To assert that status quo has only a pseudo-scientific defense and not a real one, does not mean that the religious and economic institutions of the privileged classes are never defended by individual scientists. They are frequently so defended, and even by scientists of the highest rank, but *never in their character as scientists*.

The latest example that has come to my attention of this pseudo-scientific defense of the status quo by a scholar of scientific standing, is that of Dr. Robert A. Millikan, President of the California Institute of Technology (in an address before the State Bar of California, in San Francisco, on September 20). I am dependent on the daily press for an account of Dr. Millikan's remarks. In this address Dr. Millikan reveals

what appears to be nothing less than a positive phobia on the subject of change. Any slightest attempt to alter our sacred constitution or supreme court to meet the altered conditions that confront us, is seen by Dr. Millikan as a blow at civilization itself. "Without these instruments of government our American civilization would probably already have received its mortal blow". In his role of defender of the status quo Dr. Millikan loses himself in such meaningless verbiage as to assert that those who favor modification of either court or constitution are "our worst reactionaries"; those who favor such change are "deserting the rational scientific mode of approach" . . . and are going back to the "superstitions of the middle ages". Typically enough, in support of his view of the immutability of our civilization, Dr. Millikan goes back one hundred and fifty years to Edmund Burke, whom he quotes as saying that "civilization is a contract between the great dead, the living and the unborn". Dr. Millikan's remarks follow an obvious and ancient pattern; for in every age these frantic resisters to modifications of outlived traditions have followed a pattern of retreat into verbal obscurity, reliance on outworn authority, and an emotional appeal, through the use of invidious names, to unthinking prejudices established and cultivated by that self-same tradition which they seek to defend.

Admittedly Dr. Millikan is a scholar of the highest repute in the fields of physics, mathematics and astronomy, and it is a pleasure to acknowledge the high merit of his work and discoveries in those fields. Commenting editorially on Dr. Millikan's address, the *San Francisco News*, under date of September 23, finds it "surprising" to see a man so eminent "in the scientific world voicing such unscientific thoughts". Unfortunately there is nothing "surprising" about it at all. For the spectacle of a specialist of the finest mental equipment in one field stepping out of that field into another to give utterance to nonsense and banalities is as common as it is sad. I suppose the classical American example of a specialist in one field making inept remarks in another must remain our own incomparable Henry Ford. I presume that none will contest the statement that Mr. Ford, whatever general views of him may be held, must be accounted a man of exceptional capacities in the field of motor production as at present carried on under the rules of competitive industry; but who was, outside of that field, a Jew-baiter catering to the basest emotions in our social body; and who publicly held to the pre-adolescent notion that all historical knowledge was "bunk"; and, to complete the record, Mr. Ford was, you may recall, that genius of folly who financed a "peace ship" to Europe to call off the war. But we are by no means limited to the unscholarly ranks of business men for illustrations of like absurdities. Dr. Millikan himself has on previous occasions felt free to enlighten us, from what was presumably the point of view of a scientific physicist, concerning certain difficult theological concepts, which he apparently naively assumed had been made clear to him in the course of his physical experiments, but which had in reality been handed to him by that same tradition which has supplied him with his views of civilization and government.

The practice of stepping out of one's own field to give dignified utterance to platitudinous errors does not lack for distinguished precedent. The late Professor Michael I. Pupin, also a physicist, is on record as endorsing the religious views of an illiterate Serbian peasant, and as teaching that the investments of small middle class men in corporation stock is teaching them to manage large scale business and is leading us to a cooperative society. A generation ago, Professor William

James, then dean of American psychologists, held that war's "baptism of blood" was both beneficent and necessary. A little earlier William Leibnitz, one of the keenest mathematical minds of all times and co-discoverer with Newton of the differential calculus, wrote in all seriousness what can only be termed puerilities concerning the aesthetic values of human souls being tortured in hell-fire. A few years ago Thomas A. Edison, inventive genius, escaped from his own domain to write "psychological tests" which were utterly worthless. Professor A. Eddington's quaker-cosmological God is well known. Professor A. N. Whitehead has favored us with a descriptive definition of religion which is as meaningless and mystical as the best of Madame Blavatsky (*Science and the Modern World*, p. 275).

These inanities are not due to any lack of mental acumen on the part of their sponsors; they are due to the uncritical acceptance by brilliant men of a traditional attitude toward matters which, lying outside their special fields, they have never critically investigated. Indeed it may be safely asserted that the acceptance of the scientific point of view by scientific men has been in many, possibly most, cases only piecemeal and limited. I have in mind a biologist who has the strictest and most critical standards of judgment in his own department, yet holds political views not incommensurate with those of the humblest member of the democratic party. My acquaintance with university savants is not large, yet I happen to know also a professor in one of our oldest eastern universities, who has been trained in the habits of critical thought for over half a lifetime, whose nationalistic sentiments would do credit to Adolph Hitler. Possibly things are now to some extent improving in this respect, but during the past few decades the reluctance of scientific men to apply the same critical standards of judgment which they use in their own work to social and political affairs would be incredible had it not been so frequently and so forcibly brought to our attention. During the world war, now generally thought to have been born of folly and greed, practically the entire scientific and academic world rallied to the support of those economic interests which demanded battle.

The *News* is entirely right in referring to Dr. Millikan's political views alluded to above as "unscientific". Unscientific they are, literally and completely. It would be generally conceded, I believe, that a man might be the most skillful longshoreman on the waterfront without thereby being qualified to sing in grand opera; in my view it is no less indubitable that a man may be the world's leading scholar in the matter of cosmic rays and still fall somewhat short of being a sage in the field of politics. As to the question of civilization, I content myself with the mild remark that the sciences of anthropology, sociology and social psychology, which provide the only scientific approach to the study of civilizations, have all arisen and developed since poor Burke's demise. On the problems that cluster around our constitution, Dr. Millikan would have found Professor Charles A. Beard a thousand times more illuminating than Burke on civilization. No more egregious error is commonly met than the notion that the framers of our constitution were liberty-loving democrats. Could that be the reason Dr. Millikan is so solicitous for the preservation of that document? The bill of rights contained in the amendments to the constitution were not submitted by the fifty-five dignified gentlemen who, pledged to secrecy, met behind closed doors to deliberate on what was to be our American form of government; the amendments were tacked on later as a concession to popular demand. After telling us



that of the delegates to the constitutional convention at Philadelphia in 1787 "not one member represented in his immediate personal economic interests the small farming or mechanic class", Professor Beard states that the constitution "was an economic document drawn with superb skill by men whose property interests were immediately at stake; and as such it appealed directly and unerringly to identical interests in the country at large". (An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution of the U. S., pp. 149 and 188). Does this seem an adequate basis for Dr. Millikan's assertion that those who think the constitution should be modified are "reactionary" and "superstitious"?

As our competitive and predatory social organization progressively crumbles, we shall doubtless be treated more and more frequently to the spectacle of dignified and reputable men offering to the public infantile rationalizations which will purport to be reforms and cures for our social ills, but whose sole object will be stubborn resistance to any ameliorating of the common lot. Watch for them. They will offer specious argument as to their scientific basis. Such scientific basis for predatory social organization is non-existent, and such apologists will, one and all, like the learned Doctors quoted above, be talking through their hats.



## OUR OWN DREYFUS CASE

**I** REMEMBER the Dreyfus case. It was a world sensation at the time. It was a gross miscarriage of justice which shocked the civilized world. There were many features connected with the Dreyfus case which spoke to the imagination. Alfred Dreyfus was an officer in the French army. He was sent to the Devil's Island. Emile Zola was one of his protagonists.

But as I sit in the court room of the Hall of Justice (should be Injustice) in San Francisco, watching Thomas J. Mooney and Warren K. Billings, I say to myself that even the Dreyfus case was pale compared with the Mooney-Billings case. Alfred Dreyfus only had to give seven years of his life to the French government; but Mooney and Billings have now given nineteen years of their lives to satisfy the oligarchy of California. Think of it! Here are two innocent men who have been martyred for nineteen years, and the tragedy or scandal or crime is that these two men are still being tortured by a government which knows they are innocent. Here is where California's officialdom has France's officialdom beaten by a long way. The Mooney and Billings case is so monstrous and the injustice connected with it so enormous that it is almost unbelievable that the American people have been willing to stand for it during all these years.

I remember the Dreyfus case when I was a boy in Denmark, and I never forgot the impression it made on my youthful mind. I never dreamed that I should live to be thrown face to face with a magnified repetition of the Dreyfus case. I never dreamed that I should live to see intelligent men in a civilized nation be paid to prolong an injustice which cries to high Heaven. I never dreamed that I should see an old, frail man, Referee Shaw, be paid \$50 day to watch over a proceeding which belongs to the age of Henry VIII, and to see

an overweight prosecutor, William Cleary, strut around with an air of importance, as if he fulfilled a sacred mission by keeping the cell doors of Mooney and Billings locked forever.

I am seeing a lot of things in the Hall of Justice these days. Rottenness and corruption facing honesty and light; the lackeys and errand-boys of Big Business posing as the upholders of justice, law and order, and Mooney and Billings, in good health and with clean consciences.

One of the great sights in this absurd trial, which, by the way, you help to pay for, came on Monday, October 28, when the real scoundrel in the Mooney-Billings Drama, former District Attorney, Charles Fickert, was brought into court as a witness.

This self-styled "leader" of the past who persecuted and prosecuted Mooney, accompanied by the applause of San Francisco's defunct codfish aristocracy, and who lived in the hopes of becoming Governor of California, is now wandering the streets of the larger California cities, kept alive by loans from old-time friends. A sad figure whom fate caught up with before his victims died. To see that specimen of California's officialdom in the court room facing the two men he persecuted for money handed out by San Francisco's bankers and corporation heads, was indeed a spectacle. The far-reaching net of Mooney's able counsel had at last caught one of the big fish from the muddy deep of that pool where goes the greasy water from California's creaking legal machinery.

On October 29 the hearings were transferred to the Grand Jury Room of San Francisco's City Hall, where the ghost of another participant in the Mooney Drama, James Rolph, Jr., took part in the proceedings in his "astral body", to quote Mrs. Edeau, one of Fickert's star-witnesses in 1917.

Since I became a habitué of the Hall of Justice and the City Hall these days many thoughts have been turning in my mind, and I know there is deep truth in the saying: "He'll get it in the neck—some day."

The wheels of Justice grind slowly; but they do grind—even in California.

—PETER GULDBRANDSEN



## THE AMERICAN YOUTH CONGRESS MARCHES ON

**L**AST May nearly fifty organizations participated in the Northern California Regional Youth Congress, an affiliate of the American Youth Congress. Ten of these could call themselves student groups. Only eight could be considered unions. Only fourteen were from the East Bay.

Last Saturday the East Bay beheld a Local Youth Congress nearly as large as the one just referred to. It had well-developed student, labor and church departments. One of the most encouraging things about the Youth Congress here is the way it is bringing out the religious youth.

Last spring the delegate from the student body of the Pacific Unitarian School for the Ministry, the now Rev. Gordon McWhirter, became East Bay Chairman—Northern California Chairman—was sent to the 2nd American Youth Con-



gress in Detroit and became Western Vice-Chairman. Last Saturday Dorothy McNulty of Cranmer Club Episcopal students' club, became East Bay Chairman. The other nominee for the chairmanship was Jeff Beaver of the U. C. Negro Students Club.

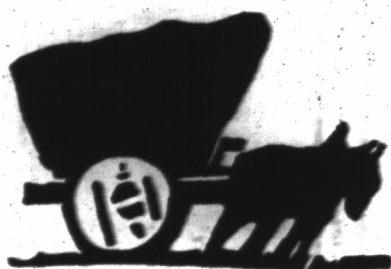
While not official until ratified by the member organizations the program, resolutions, decisions there made and the fellowship there established are the base of effective local and coast-wise action, soon to be evidenced by the A. Y. C. and its member organizations. I do not believe one person there, from the Junior Republican to the Left-wing Communists, did not feel that something worthwhile was accomplished, though the one probably thought it was too radical and the others called it reformist.

There have been congresses before. They have made programs and planned actions and resolved great things. But this congress is unique in my experience. It steadfastly resolved to plan nothing that could not be put into good, sound practice within the next month and a half. It gave concrete promises of such support as it could mobilize to certain unions at present, "on the spot". It named a date for a visit to the Italian consulate, and gave mandate to the Student Department to hold an educational mass meeting on the Italo-Ethiopian situation. It decided to ask ministers to allow the A. Y. C. to take over a service November 10, and already one has offered. The few generalized resolutions passed were concretized by specific aspects for immediate attack. It was decided to open a central headquarters and to issue a bulletin, the first issue to be the proceedings of this congress. And a reconvening was set for December 1.

But my interest in the congress is still, as ever, the human relationship built up: the realization on the part of diversely opinioned persons that "We be of one blood—". Two instances: A member of a "left-wing" group agreed to contact church youth. I remember his horrorstricken description of one of the first he visited. "Why, I didn't know there were any such people any more. They sat around and made little prayers and gave testimonials and discussed the fine points of Christianity so seriously and sang hymns like 'I love Je-sus, Jesus loves me'." He was so astounded he just sat there and didn't say anything, but I understand he now likes visiting churches. The other case is Dorothy McNulty's remark as she prepared her report from the Student Department: "You know, my opinion of communists has gone up tremendously to-day."

Dr. Hedley will be amused to know that at least one of the Young Communist League delegates recognized their religious potentialities by participating in the Church Department, and that they recognized his worth by electing him to the East Bay Council.

—CLIFTON AMSBURY



## BOOKS

### THE DANCE OF DEATH

BY HAAKON M. CHEVALIER

THIS novel\* is a vast fresco depicting a corrupt, over-ripe society dancing on the edge of a volcano. The brilliance, wealth and power of pre-War Europe flash before the reader's eyes, and the spectacle of its pomp and magnificence is no less absorbing than the emerging sense of its essential rottenness and the doom which awaits it. We participate in the social life, the pleasures, vices and labors, the ideas and the aspirations of the best and the worst specimens of the upper classes. Royalty, nobility, high society, men of science, scholars, writers, artists, adventurers, pimps and the thousand satellites and hangers-on move and have a voice in this impressive pageant. Extended discussions of philosophy, biology, the social sciences, philology, history, sex, politics, diplomacy, fashion, music, finance, which reveal the extraordinary range and depth of Briffault's mind, form a running commentary on the action.

The point of reference that gives unity to the unfolding panorama of a continent is the account of the growth and orientation of the mind of Julian Bern, from adolescence to young manhood. Julian is a conventional, engaging, somewhat depersonalized hero. While he commands the reader's complete sympathy up to the last third of the book, he is obviously a vehicle rather than a character—he is just what he needs to be in order to convey that picture of Europe which is the novel's real subject. As the son of a cultivated English diplomat exiled in Italy, who has wide social connections, Julian has access to the highest social circles. He gropes amid perplexities, gradually unmasking the monstrous hypocrisy, the injustice, the stupidity of what is called civilization, and plunges avidly into the study of history, philosophy and science. His studies and his contacts with life nourish the slow growth of a point of view which leads him, at least intellectually, completely to reject that old, dying world amid whose living and dead ruins he has been raised. In Rome, Naples, Paris, London and the Riviera Julian moves on the periphery of an extraordinary world of intrigue, adventure, romance and luxurious depravity. He becomes aware of the vast submerged world of the workers upon whose wretchedness and sufferings the fabulous world of the upper classes feeds. He is revolted, but remains to the end perplexed.

There is a love story, too, very beautiful and delicate. Julian first encounters Zena Nevidoff, a beautiful Russian princess, as a mere adolescent and they have an innocent love affair which is abruptly broken up when Zena is whisked away and made to marry a depraved Russian count. Towards the end of the book Julian, almost 30, again meets Zena. They discover that they have never ceased to love each other, and go off to live in a baroque German castle. They are startled from this romantic world by the news that war is about to break out. In the closing scene, the lovers are put on board a train leaving Berlin for an unknown destination, in a first-class compartment with blinds drawn and Zena, when the lieutenant deputed to look after them asks if there is anything else she wants, answers: "Oh, yes . . . a bunch of roses." That final request epitomizes the consummate frivolity of a world that definitely came to an end with the World War.

As one closes the book one realizes that Briffault himself is

\*EUROPA, by Robert Briffault. (Charles Scribner's Sons)  
\$2.75

very much of this world. Intellectually he has broken away from it completely, but he relives it with unmistakable wistfulness. Like Talleyrand, he looks back upon a vanished world to which he has been emotionally conditioned, and cannot forget that, in spite of its corruption and essential ugliness, it contrived for its favored denizens a certain grace of living.

There are roughly two big stories in *Europa*: the decay of upper-class European culture, and Julian's efforts towards an integration of his personality. The first is completely successful and its polymorphous style peculiarly appropriate. Briffault can write with dignity and distinction. He can also write breezily, flashily, in the style of the smart society novel, evincing a healthy relish for the multiple manifestations of sex. The author is devoid of solemnity, and he is not afraid of displaying what genteel people might call bad taste. To reassure readers of more catholic tastes he again and again gives proof of the most exquisitely refined sensibility: he loves both Rabelais and Dante wholeheartedly and with rare understanding. It is the other story—that of Julian's development—which seems to me less successful. Julian does not become real, does not grow into anything like integration, and it is in the treatment of his character that one occasionally has an uneasy sense of the author's inability to project the significant experience with which he is identified. Among numerous slight infelicities of technique, this alone strikes me as a serious shortcoming. There is something distinctly unpleasant about Julian and Zena as the book closes. For all their intelligence and charm, they are as rotten as the rest. The author obviously intended Julian's education to be a gradual liberation from the paralyzing spell of old Europe and its culture, a salvaging of Julian's character—as a symbol of Europe's essentially fine heritage—from the wreckage which the war was about to consummate. Not even the flaming words of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, which he completely accepts, are able to stir him from his sterile indecisiveness.

Around the main plot a number of sub-plots are woven. We touch the international revolutionary movement at a number of points, the secret intrigues and manipulations that led up to the War, and vast financial enterprises.

There is a gradual, very deft acceleration and intensification of tempo as the book develops. The pace of the dance grows madder, and there is evoked for the reader a sense of impending disaster. Briffault does create with enormous effectiveness a grandiose sense of time and space. Like the shadowy person who tells the story, the reader "is overcome with an uncanny feeling, a feeling of time melting away, dissolving, rushing and sweeping by, ruinous and terrifying."

The most successful parts are those in which Briffault, the social philosopher, the moralist, the man of encyclopedic mind records his observations on people and customs and ideas. As an objective picture of a broad world of men and women, the book is intensely alive. The least successful are those which call for the novelist's peculiar gifts, the evocation and motivation of character. Yet the author's gifts of insight and understanding are so great that they largely compensate that major deficiency, and the reader emerges from the novel with a sense of having lived through an experience of extraordinary significance.

But with the picture of social disintegration the book affords there is elaborated a point of view which is central to Briffault's whole thinking—the social point of view. Societies as well as individuals live by a philosophy, and Europe and all Western civilization are dying because it is built on a false philosophy, "the old primitive dogma of the individual soul, the most stubborn of ancient superstitions, which, in one form or another, has falsified all thought". It is towards the new, the social point of view that Julian is feeling his way—though he does not manage by the end of the book to integrate it into his experience—and it is the conflict of these two radi-

cally opposed points of view that constitutes the essence of the drama so richly elaborated in novel form.

## APPLAUDING HEYWOOD BROWN

IT SEEMS TO ME, 1925-1935, by Heywood Brown (Harcourt, Brace) \$2.50

(Reviewed by Tom Daggett)

A GOOD columnist can doubt anything but himself. He must believe in himself easily, daily, thoroughly. Heywood Brown does. He applauds Brown not only when Brown notes the sticky smugger of stuffed shirts who felt they were solving the unemployment problem by paying five cents for a three cent apple, but also when Brown weighs a row of Martinis against the Hall of Science at the World's Fair, and finds science wanting and more Martinis waiting.

In this book, 106 of his columns during the past ten years have been collected to prove that a first rate columnist can turn out informal essays of annoying exactness on all subjects despite the impending disaster of a 24-hour deadline.

Brown is very disconcerting to many people, so disconcerting that the *San Francisco News* often omits his daily offering. He is annoying because the obvious truths of his peers or his betters in politics and finance are obviously fairy tales to him. Realizing that some of the best people, since Moses and Christ, have been agitators, he is proud to accept the appellation.

Brown is very readable because he calls a cockeyed world a cockeyed world, never a world suffering internal contradictions and contradicting internals. He is interesting because he is just as informed about Tex Guinan as Frank Roosevelt, the first robin, the last naval conference.

The book, itself, is poorly edited. The dateline on each article fails to appear except in the table of contents, thus requiring 106 flutterings of the leaves to find out when the columns were written. As all newspaper work is dated, failure conveniently to note same is comparable to sending some excitable college boys a book of 106 blonde beauties, without including their phone numbers. Result in both cases: frustration.

## CLAWING AT THE VEIL

AT MADAME BONNARD'S, by Joseph Vogel. (Alfred A. Knopf) \$2

(Reviewed by David Cartwright)

ALL THE roomers who share tubs at Madame Bonnard's are clawing at the veil which hides reality from a world of moronic fancy. Reduced to a rooming-house outlook, they revolve confusedly in a continuum of sordid events and petty practices. No sun shines in at the smudged windows, and glamour is a soiled nightgown in the hallway. The Madame rules with an iron hand, and unlucky is the tenant who cannot pay the westside tariff. Her permanent guests engage in the small and blunted conceits of keyhole peeping, digging small change and dreaming unrealizable dreams. None of the inhabitants of this musty and frayed "grand hotel" knows a great purpose—and hope itself is an abortion.

Shop-clerks, taxi-drivers, catch-as-catch-can girls, all persist only in the face of simple economic needs—the rent, a new dress, a lurid and vicarious movie. The methodical Dutchman sells shoes by day, and at night counts his speculative store of guilders. Hymer Lavin finds it too hard to be a Jew and get a



job, accepts defeat and disappears. In an applebox apartment Ann awaits a baby, while the sharp and tinselled Irene avoids similar issue in a mousetrap bathroom. Like mechanical toys these blind and hapless automata of a functionless city and society go through the stiff and thwarted motions of being human. Life is the subway, the office and a desolate room. Courage is a wisecrack.

Even here, though, something in the form of hope takes embryonic shape. At night one man waits for half-lowered shades, a glimpse of softly moulded flesh; a second, a rusted antique shop clerk, anticipates, in the darker hours, the inspirational idea that will embark him upon his *The Principle of Mild Surprise*. The stiff and nocturnal calisthenics of the frugal Dutchman are interrupted, when the lights are out, by a cheap and sterile romance. But all of these ambitions are tarnished; they bear the patina that comes to all men who serve and all ideas that are born in a world whose chief pride is in the magnificent theft and the openly contrived plunder of the social wealth.

With acid humor, as bitter as his stories, Joseph Vogel etches in the fragmentary outlines of the "little half dead". But because he is conscious of what it is that breaks off these lives before they are lived, his precise portraits of frustration enact the larger drama of contemporary decay. The tenants of Madame Bonnard's mirror the whole pattern of the rooming house side of life in the metropoli of capitalism. Vogel's characters may be waiting for something more than nothing, they may not be Dahlberg's "bottom dogs", they would not like Studs Lonigan's friends, but they live with as little hope. The unrelieved pattern of despair which marks this pathetic world is a sort of unsounded challenge to the malformation of the price economy. And due to the clarity of Vogel's conscience one can sense the small power for revolutionary good that the dismayed petit bourgeoisie may be, and the greater danger of fascist evil-doing which might be their role.

## REQUIRES AN ANSWER

**PRISONER OF THE OGPU**, by George Kitchin. (Longmans, Green)

(Reviewed by Leslie T. White)

**T**HIS book requires an answer more than a mere review, because it smacks faintly of Hearst propaganda. It is well written in reportorial style, exciting and informative, but with a distorted perspective. Whether this is deliberate or accidental it is difficult to guess.

Kitchin, as the title announces, was a prisoner in Soviet Russia and this book is a résumé of his experience and the horrors he witnessed. Obviously, the author is a sensitive man and the rigors of prison life impressed him deeply. But to give the devil his due, one must understand something of the responsibilities heaped on the shoulders of a prison guard, whether he belongs to the Soviet, the Nazis, or our own country; these men have to be tough and calloused. Brutality is not confined to race or nationality and because a Soviet guard kicks a pathetic old prisoner in the stomach it does not prove that Russia is an economic failure any more than the kick of a New York cop proves that capitalism is a success. Apparently, however, Mr. Kitchin thinks it does. However, since I have not enjoyed the hospitality of the OGPU, my opinion is mere hearsay and I can do no better than to quote Mrs. Marguerite Harrison who was a "guest" of the Soviet political police for several years. In her excellent new book, *There's Always Tomorrow*, she says:

"Such things seem terrible (in reference to the trickery of the OGPU) yet it must be realized that they did not originate

with the Bolsheviks. The methods of the Imperial Okhrana (the secret police of the Czar) were the same. Moreover, in our sweeping condemnation of Bolshevik methods we are apt to forget that the police of far more advanced countries are not always much more scrupulous in their methods of obtaining information."

To this excellent and fair summary of Mrs. Harrison, I might add my own testimony, based on about ten years intimate contact as a peace officer, that I can match the brutality as practised in, say, Germany or Russia, with that practised in our United States and, I'm sorry to admit, we hold our own. Unfortunately, however, under known police systems, physical brutality cannot be eradicated—not completely.

## TWO BOOKS IN ONE

**LOVE IN WINTER**, by Storm Jameson. (Alfred A. Knopf) \$2.50

(Reviewed by Dorothea Castelhun)

**M**ISS JAMESON could easily have made two books out of the material in *Love in Winter*, so little do the two main themes depend on each other. On the one hand—the story of Hervey Russell and her helpless love for her cousin Nicholas Roxby; on the other—half a dozen interesting characters in the political, financial and social world, all involved in the growing struggle between capital and labor. Their discussions reflect the mental attitudes of the different classes and the problems facing them. Although Hervey works for her living and is a radical at heart, her entire story could be left out and the lives of the second group of characters would not be affected in the slightest degree—and vice versa.

Somewhat less bitter about the horrible after-effects of the World War than in previous novels, Miss Jameson seems to be transferring the strength of her pen—which is undeniably of some significance in English fiction to-day—to vehement social criticism. Perhaps she realizes that if she wants the vast middle class of novel-devourers to read what she has to say concerning conditions which most of them prefer to ignore, the title *Love in Winter* is a better choice than something like "Social Conflicts in England", which might more accurately describe the major contents of her book.

## CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

**M. STONE** attended seven American universities, one in Berlin, was graduated from Chicago, but—"got my education in the left wing labor movement of Seattle, where I contributed to all the radical papers and edited some."

**PETER GULDBRANDSEN** is a Danish lecturer and journalist, and American representative of two Copenhagen dailies, *Politiken* and *Social-Demokraten*.

**LESLIE T. WHITE** was a criminal investigator in the District Attorney's office in Los Angeles for ten years. He has written many stories for detective magazines and is now working on his life experiences.

**CLIFTON AMSBURY** is a graduate of the University of California, actively interested in the Youth Congress.

**HAARON M. CHEVALIER** is a member of the French Department at the University of California. He is the author of a book on Anatole France, *The Ironical Temper*, and translator of Malraux's *Man's Fate*. He is now at work on a novel and two translations from the French—one by Aragon and another by Malraux.

**DAVID CARTWRIGHT** is a student at the University of California whose book reviews have appeared in national magazines.



## "THEY TELL ME--"

A FEW WEEKS ago Una Jeffers spoke at Mills College on Yeats in celebration of the collection of Yeats' mss which Albert Bender had on display there. Enthusiasts persuaded her to repeat the talk in her home town, and so on October 23 she gave the talk at Carmel Highlands on the property of Mrs. Blanche Matthias in a cottage decorated with brown and yellow chrysanthemums and some of Una Jeffers' Yeatsiana.

The listeners included poets, playwrights, musicians, journalists, painters and folk-tale reciters. Robinson Jeffers sat to one side listening proudly. He said afterwards he "was not at all nervous: she had done it before and so I knew she could do it." Her simple black velvet frock made Una's "dear Irish face", as Mabel Dodge Luhan called it in "Winter in Taos", stand out all the more with its faultless creamy complexion. More than one face was tear-wet before the talk was over. Mrs. Jeffers told of Yeats' life and the ideals he strove for—to "be sincere", to write naturally; how he admired William Morris more than any other writer of his time; how many-sided he was; of his work as Senator, in founding the Abbey Theatre, his essays, his socialist interests; his plays, autobiography, poems, travels, friendships. His enormous interest in people, his love for Maud Gonne, his tower and garden which the Jeffers visited when they were in Ireland in 1930. At that time once, when near his house, Mrs. Jeffers asked an old peasant about the poet. The latter replied, "Oh, yes, the old gentleman has just passed by." Una Jeffers couldn't believe her ears: all her life she has had above her desk a photograph of Yeats as a young poet, with long hair hanging over his eyes and a poet's far-off expression: that vision couldn't be now "the old gentleman"!

Yeats' later poems have more energy and passion than his earlier ones, Mrs. Jeffers believes. In his early manhood he had to endure "as much as we have" from the "lost generation"—"No, it wasn't 'lost', what was it, Robin?" she asked, turning to Jeffers. "Tragic generation," murmured Robin, and Una went on. "These lost ones included Henley, Wilde and others—they were neurasthenics, bitter, disillusioned, unintegrated. They are described in Yeats' exquisite autobiography, 'Trembling of the Veil'."

Yeats made himself a great personality, and Una thinks it was by the only method one can—by "rejecting experiences that have nothing to do with you and so developing a unity of personality".

Among the audience were Paul Dougherty, marine painter; Mrs. Jesse Lynch Williams, Henry Meade and Mona Williams, Mrs. Albert Rhys Williams, Susan Porter, sister of the late Jesse Lynch Williams, who tells so exquisitely the old Irish folk tales; Charles Frederick Collin, English painter; Noel Sullivan, Edward Kuster, Una Jeffers' first husband, and his wife Gabrielle, daughter of John and Mary Younghunter; Steen Scon-

hoft, singer; Bert Heron, Carmel's poet-playwright-ex-mayor; and many other Carmel characters.

After "man's resinous heart had fed" on the charming lecture and his material body on a delightful tea, his aesthetic soul was further nourished by a rich sunset through the pines over the western ocean. Yeats couldn't have wanted anything better.

AT THE LAWRENCE Memorial Service held at Kiowa Ranch, Taos, N. M., on Sunday, September 15, Mrs. Merriam Golden read D. H. Lawrence's last poem, "Prayer". It runs:

Give me the moon at my feet,  
Set my feet upon the crescent like a Lord,  
O let my ankles be bathed in moonlight,  
that I may go sure and moon-shod,  
cool and bright-footed toward my goal.

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"The service was simple and beautiful," according to the "Taos Valley News", which is edited by Spud Johnson, poet, one time "New Yorker" writer, and editor of New Mexico's "Laughing Horse".

"Four Indians sang Indian funeral songs to the soft beat of their drums, then danced briefly; after which Mr. Stewart Barr, son-in-law of Mrs. Frieda Lawrence, delivered a brief eulogy. . . . "After the sun had set, a huge bonfire was lighted on the slope in front of the chapel, and Mr. Scott Murray, a rancher from San Cristobal, who worked with Lawrence building the ranch-houses, placed the ashes inside the crypt and sealed it, while the Indians sang softly in the gathering twilight . . ."

—ELLA WINTER

## BIASED!

Ever so often some well-meaning person says to us: "There ARE two sides to every question and you should present both of them."

Or they say: "You should hold an impartial and objective viewpoint."

But you can't present men or issues without being on one side or the other. Take the vigilantes, Hearst, the Industrial Association, the Waterfront Employers—you see what we mean.



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